

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 IO-14 SAB-01 DRC-01 /134 W

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R 011400Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1520

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANAA

USINT ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0973

BEIRUT ALSO PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR LY

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 1 CELEBRATIONS OF REGIME'S FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

1. AS ANNOUNCED, MILITARY PARADE TOOK PLACE MORNING OF SEPT
1 IN PRESENCE OF QADHAFI, OTHER RCC MEMBERS AND FOREIGN
DELEGATIONS. THERE WERE NO SURPRISES. QADHAFI DID NOT SPEAK,
PRESUMABLY BECAUSE, AS OFFICIAL COMMENTARIES BEFORE EVENT MADE
CLEAR, HE THINKS THIS IS TIME FOR ACTION, NOT MORE SPEECHES.
NEW MILITARY EQUIPMENT ON DISPLAY WAS STAGGERING IN CONTEXT OF
LIBYA'S 20,000 MAN ARMY, AND CHEERLEADERS STRESSED TO MODERATELY
ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD THAT EQUIPMENT WAS FOR DEFENSE OF WHOLE ARAB

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NATION, NOT JUST LIBYA. IT INCLUDED UPWARDS OF 200 RUSSIAN T-54 TANKS, ABOUT 30 T-62 TANKS, AND SAM 3 AND 6 MISSILES. T-62S AND SAM 6S ARE NOTEWORTHY NEW ACQUISITIONS. FOREIGN DELEGATIONS WERE KEPT WAITING HOUR AND HALF ON REVIEWING STAND BEFORE QADHAFI AND OTHER RCC MEMBERS FINALLY SHOWED UP. PRIME MINISTER JALLUD WAS NOT PRESENT, NOR WAS MINISTER OF INTERIOR AL-HUMAYDI; WE DO NOT SEE THIS AS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT. WE THOUGHT WE RECOGNIZED RCC MEMBER AL-HUNI, WHO HAS BEEN REPORTED IN EXILE IN CAIRO.

2. AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, FOREIGN TURNOUT FOR CELEBRATIONS HAS BEEN REMARKABLY GOOD, AND MUST BE HEARTENING TO LIBYANS. ONLY FRANCE WAS CONSPICUOUS BY FAILURE TO SEND A DELEGATION, WHICH MAY INDICATE CHILL BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES AFTER MIRAGE AFFAIR. BY CONTRAST, SOVIETS SENT A MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF RUSSIA AND A MAJOR GENERAL, WHO ARRIVED SEPARATELY.

3. EARLY INTO MORNING HOURS BEFORE PARADE, TELEVISION VIEWERS WERE TREATED TO EXTRAORDINARY SPECTACLE OF QADHAFI AND FOUR OTHER RCC MEMBERS, MAJORS JALLUD, HAWWADI, HAMZA, AND KHARROUBI TALKING INFORMALLY ABOUT EVENTS WHICH LED UP TO THEIR 1969 COUP, BEGINNING WITH BOY SCOUT CAMP. DEFERENCE OF FOUR MEN, PARTICULARLY JALLUD, TO QADHAFI WAS STRIKING. THEY REFERRED TO THE HISTORICAL QADHAFI AS "MU'AMMAR", BUT RESPECTFULLY CALLED HIM COLONEL WHEN ADDRESSING HIM DIRECTLY. THERE WAS NO MISTAKING HIS DOMINANCE OF THEM. MOOD OF GROUP WAS ALTERNATELY BOYISH AND GRAVE, AND PROBABLY REFLECTS THAT OF THEIR PRIVATE MEETINGS. WATCHING THEM, IT WAS HARD TO BELIEVE THEY HAD BEEN RUNNING LIBYA FOR FIVE YEARS. THEY AVOIDED TALKING ABOUT ANYTHING WHICH HAD HAPPENED AFTER SEPTEMBER 1, 1969.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY EQUIPMENT, INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TRIPOL00973
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740242-1095
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740981/aaaacqsb.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 APR 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <24 MAR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SEPTEMBER 1 CELEBRATIONS OF REGIME'S FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
TAGS: PFOR, LY
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005